



Evaluating OutLoud!: A CEFR-Based Digital Game for EFL Speaking Instruction

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of a CEFR-based situational dialogue game, OutLoud!, in improving EFL learners' speaking competence. The research was conducted at Goolin Indonesia, a non-formal English education institution in Palembang, over several instructional sessions. The population consisted of EFL learners enrolled in the institution, with a sample of 20 participants ranging from A2 to C1 proficiency levels. The study employed a quasi-experimental one-group pre-test–post-test design. Data were collected using three instruments: a speaking test, a questionnaire, and classroom observation. The speaking test, administered before and after the intervention, assessed learners' performance based on CEFR-aligned criteria, including fluency, grammatical accuracy, vocabulary, pronunciation, and interaction. The questionnaire used a 5-point Likert scale to measure learners' engagement, motivation, and confidence, while observations were conducted to document participation and interaction during the learning process. Data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics, including mean scores and percentage improvement, supported by qualitative observations. The results showed that learners' speaking performance improved from a mean score of 62.40 in the pre-test to 75.50 in the post-test, indicating a 21% increase. In addition, questionnaire results revealed high levels of engagement (M = 4.32), motivation (M = 4.45), and confidence (M = 4.28). These findings suggest that the integration of CEFR, gamification, and situational dialogue in a digital game environment can effectively enhance speaking competence and create a positive learning experience in non-formal EFL contexts.

Keywords: CEFR, digital game, EFL, speaking instruction

Evaluasi OutLoud!: Permainan Digital Berbasis CEFR untuk Pembelajaran Berbicara EFL

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengevaluasi efektivitas permainan dialog situasional berbasis CEFR, *OutLoud!*, dalam meningkatkan kompetensi berbicara pembelajar EFL. Penelitian ini dilaksanakan di Goolin Indonesia, sebuah lembaga pendidikan bahasa Inggris nonformal di Palembang, selama beberapa sesi pembelajaran. Populasi penelitian terdiri atas pembelajar EFL yang terdaftar di lembaga tersebut, dengan sampel sebanyak 20 peserta yang berada pada tingkat kemahiran A2 hingga C1. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain kuasi-eksperimental dengan model one-group pre-test–post-test. Data dikumpulkan melalui tiga instrumen, yaitu tes berbicara, kuesioner, dan observasi kelas. Tes berbicara yang diberikan sebelum dan sesudah intervensi digunakan untuk menilai performa peserta berdasarkan kriteria yang selaras dengan CEFR, meliputi kefasihan, ketepatan gramatikal, kosakata, pelafalan, dan kemampuan interaksi. Kuesioner menggunakan skala Likert 5 poin untuk mengukur keterlibatan, motivasi, dan kepercayaan diri peserta, sedangkan observasi dilakukan untuk mendokumentasikan partisipasi dan interaksi selama proses pembelajaran. Analisis data dilakukan menggunakan statistik deskriptif, termasuk nilai rata-rata dan persentase peningkatan, yang didukung oleh data observasi kualitatif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa performa berbicara peserta meningkat dari nilai rata-rata 62,40 pada pre-test menjadi 75,50 pada post-test, yang menunjukkan peningkatan sebesar 21%. Selain itu, hasil kuesioner menunjukkan tingkat keterlibatan (M = 4,32), motivasi (M = 4,45), dan kepercayaan diri (M = 4,28) yang tinggi. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa integrasi CEFR, gamifikasi, dan dialog situasional dalam lingkungan permainan digital dapat secara efektif meningkatkan kompetensi berbicara serta menciptakan pengalaman belajar yang positif dalam konteks EFL non-formal.

Keywords: permainan digitl, CEFR, pembelajaran berbicara, EFL

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INTRODUCTION

The ability to communicate effectively in English, particularly through speaking, has become increasingly important in global academic, professional, and social contexts (Crystal, 2019). As English continues to function as a lingua franca across international domains, individuals are expected not only to comprehend the language but also to actively participate in communicative exchanges that require fluency, clarity, and contextual appropriateness. Within the field of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), speaking is widely acknowledged as one of the most complex skills to acquire because it involves the simultaneous use of multiple competencies, including grammatical accuracy, lexical range, pronunciation, discourse management, and sociolinguistic awareness. In addition, speaking requires real-time processing and interaction, which often places significant cognitive and affective demands on learners (Godwin-Jones, 2023; Hung et al., 2018). Unlike reading or listening, which allow more time for comprehension, speaking requires immediate production and negotiation of meaning, making it particularly challenging for learners who lack sufficient exposure to authentic communication. Consequently, the development of speaking competence has become a central concern in language education, especially in contexts where English is not used as a daily means of communication.

Despite its recognized importance, many EFL learners continue to encounter persistent difficulties in developing effective speaking skills. These challenges stem from a combination of pedagogical, environmental, and psychological factors (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017; Derakhshan et al., 2016). In many instructional settings, teaching practices still prioritize grammatical correctness and rote memorization over communicative use, resulting in limited opportunities for learners to engage in meaningful interaction (Richards, 2017). As a result, learners may demonstrate knowledge of language forms but struggle to use them

appropriately in real-life situations. Furthermore, affective factors such as anxiety, fear of making mistakes, and lack of confidence often hinder learners from actively participating in speaking activities (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012; Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014). These issues are particularly pronounced in non-formal learning contexts, such as language courses, where instructional design may vary widely and may not always incorporate structured frameworks or interactive learning media. The absence of engaging and contextually relevant learning tools in such environments can further reduce learners' motivation and limit their opportunities to practice speaking in authentic and supportive settings (Hung et al., 2018).

In response to these challenges, recent research has increasingly focused on innovative pedagogical approaches that leverage technology and learner-centered strategies to enhance speaking instruction. Among these, gamification and digital game-based learning (DGBL) have gained considerable attention for their potential to create engaging and interactive learning environments (Deterding et al., 2011; Sailer & Homner, 2020). Gamification involves the integration of game elements such as points, levels, rewards, and challenges into educational contexts, with the aim of increasing learner motivation and participation (Deterding et al., 2011). Studies have shown that gamified learning environments can foster a sense of achievement, encourage active engagement, and reduce anxiety, thereby creating conditions that are conducive to language practice (Sailer & Homner, 2020). Empirical evidence also suggests that gamification can improve learners' communicative competence and willingness to speak by providing a low-pressure environment where mistakes are treated as part of the learning process (Safitri et al., 2024). Similarly, digital game-based language learning offers immersive and contextualized experiences in which learners can interact with simulated scenarios, practice language use, and receive immediate feedback (Hung et al., 2018). Recent studies further highlight the effectiveness of digital games in supporting various aspects of



language learning, including vocabulary development, interactional skills, and learner autonomy (Chowdhury et al., 2024). These findings suggest that digital games can serve as powerful tools for facilitating meaningful language use and enhancing learners' overall engagement in the learning process.

Alongside these technological approaches, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) has gained recognition as a comprehensive and internationally standardized framework for describing language proficiency (Council of Europe, 2020). CEFR provides detailed descriptors of language ability across different levels, enabling educators to design instruction and assessment that are structured, measurable, and aligned with learners' needs. In the context of speaking, CEFR emphasizes communicative competence, interactional ability, and functional language use, making it a valuable foundation for developing context-based speaking activities (Piccardo & North, 2019). However, despite its widespread adoption in formal education systems, the application of CEFR in non-formal learning environments remains limited. In many cases, CEFR is used primarily as an assessment tool rather than as a basis for designing interactive and engaging learning experiences. Moreover, the integration of CEFR with digital and gamified learning approaches is still relatively underdeveloped, indicating a gap between standardized frameworks and innovative instructional practices.

Despite the growing body of research on gamification, digital game-based learning, and CEFR, there is still a lack of studies that integrate these elements into a cohesive instructional approach and evaluate their effectiveness in real learning contexts (Sailer & Homner, 2020; Piccardo & North, 2019). Many existing studies tend to focus on a single approach, such as gamification or CEFR, without examining how these elements can complement each other to enhance speaking instruction (Hung et al., 2018; Chowdhury et al., 2024). In addition, while

situational dialogue is widely recognized as an effective method for developing communicative competence by exposing learners to realistic language use, its integration into digital game-based environments has not been sufficiently explored (Richards, 2017). This limitation suggests that current research has yet to fully address the potential of combining structured proficiency frameworks, interactive learning technologies, and contextualized communication tasks (Godwin-Jones, 2023). Therefore, there is a clear need for empirical research that evaluates how such an integrated approach can be implemented and how they impact learners' speaking development in authentic learning settings.

This study addresses a critical gap in EFL speaking instruction by proposing and empirically examining an integrated approach that combines the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, gamified digital game-based learning, and situational dialogue. Theoretically, it advances current scholarship by demonstrating how standardized proficiency frameworks can be operationalized within interactive and technology-enhanced learning environments, thereby contributing to a more coherent model of speaking instruction. Practically, this study provides robust empirical evidence on the effectiveness of the OutLoud! game in improving learners' speaking competence, engagement, and confidence. The findings offer concrete pedagogical implications for educators and curriculum designers, particularly in non-formal EFL contexts, by presenting a scalable and contextually adaptable model for implementing structured, engaging, and learner-centered speaking activities.

Based on these considerations, this study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of a CEFR-based gamified situational dialogue game, OutLoud!, in improving learners' speaking competence in a non-formal EFL education course at Goolin Indonesia. Specifically, the study addresses the following questions: Does the use of OutLoud! effectively improve learners' speaking competence? Can this digital game enhance learners' speaking

performance? Additionally, does the use of OutLoud! increase learners' engagement and confidence during speaking activities?

This study is expected to offer significant educational contributions, particularly in the context of non-formal EFL learning. It provides a pedagogical model that integrates the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages with gamified digital learning, thereby supporting more structured yet engaging speaking instruction. For educators, this study offers practical insights into designing interactive speaking activities that align with proficiency levels while maintaining learner motivation. For learners, the use of a gamified situational dialogue game is expected to create a supportive and low-anxiety environment that encourages active participation and confidence in speaking. Additionally, for language course providers, this study may serve as a reference for developing innovative, technology-enhanced curricula that respond to the evolving demands of 21st-century language education

This study employed a quasi-experimental design using a one-group pre-test–post-test approach to evaluate the effectiveness of a language learning game named OutLoud!. This game is based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) with various situational dialogues in improving learners' speaking competence. This design was selected due to the practical constraints of working

with intact classes in a non-formal educational setting, where random assignment was not feasible. The participants consisted of 20 EFL learners enrolled at Goolin Indonesia, a non-formal English language education institution located in Palembang. They were categorized at A2-C1 level of English proficiency according to the institution's placement procedures and had prior experience learning English.

Data were collected using three main instruments. A speaking test was administered as both a pre-test and a post-test to measure learners' speaking competence. The assessment was based on CEFR-aligned criteria, including fluency, accuracy, vocabulary use, pronunciation, and interactional ability. In addition, a questionnaire was distributed to gather learners' perceptions of engagement, motivation, and confidence during the use of the game. To assess learners' speaking performance, this study employed an analytical scoring rubric adapted from the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, as shown in Table 1. The rubric consists of five components, namely fluency, grammatical accuracy, lexical range, pronunciation, and interactional competence, each of which reflects key dimensions of communicative speaking ability. Each component was rated on a five-point scale ranging from 1 (very poor) to 5 (excellent), allowing for a detailed and objective evaluation of learners' performance.

Table-1
 Speaking Scoring Rubric

Indicator	Scoring Description				
	1	2	3	4	5
Fluency	Unable to produce continuous speech	Frequent hesitation; speech is fragmented	Noticeable pauses; uneven flow	Generally fluent; occasional hesitation	Speaks smoothly with natural flow; minimal hesitation
Grammatical Accuracy	Persistent errors that block communication	Frequent errors that sometimes obscure meaning	Frequent grammatical errors but meaning is clear	Mostly accurate; some noticeable errors	Consistently accurate; only minor errors



Lexical Range	Extremely limited vocabulary	Very limited vocabulary; frequent misuse	Limited vocabulary; repetition occurs	Adequate range of vocabulary with occasional misuse	Uses a wide range of vocabulary appropriately
Pronunciation	Unintelligible or heavily influenced by L1	Often unclear; difficult to understand at times	Understandable despite several errors	Mostly clear; minor pronunciation issues	Clear, natural pronunciation; easily understood
Interaction	Unable to maintain interaction	Minimal participation; struggles to respond	Participates but relies on support; limited initiative	Responds appropriately; maintains interaction with little support	Actively maintains interaction; responds and initiates effectively

The questionnaire used a Likert scale format to capture participants' responses. Lastly, classroom observations were also conducted throughout the intervention to document learners' participation, interaction, and overall engagement during speaking activities.

The procedure of the study was carried out over several instructional sessions. At the initial stage, participants completed a pre-test to establish their baseline speaking ability. This was followed by the implementation of the treatment using the OutLoud! digital game, which integrates CEFR-based descriptors, gamification elements, and situational dialogue scenarios. During the intervention, learners engaged in interactive speaking tasks designed to simulate real-life communication contexts, allowing them to practice language use in a structured yet engaging environment. At the end of the treatment period, a post-test was administered to assess improvements in speaking performance. Participants also completed the questionnaire, and observational data were recorded throughout the sessions. Figure 1 illustrates the research procedure employed in this study.

METHOD

The type of research used in this article is qualitative descriptive research. This research

emphasizes the process of interpretation and interpretation in processing data in the form of text or words (Ratna, 2013:25; Razak, 2017; Afifuddin & Sabaeni, 2002). Based on this opinion, it can be understood that qualitative research is understood as an approach in which the researcher acts as the primary instrument in examining the research object that occurs naturally without manipulation. By applying qualitative descriptive methods, researchers are able to analyze data in depth by outlining and describing the results of the analysis and discussion. This process aims to describe the results of the analysis to answer the questions in the problem formulation.

The data source for this research is the novel *Dompot Ayah Sepatu Ibu* by J.S. Khairen. The data for this research consists of texts contained in the novel. These texts can be quotations related to the resilience of instrumental rationality actions, resilience of value rationality actions, resilience of traditional actions, and resilience of affective actions contained in the novel. The data collection technique in this study uses reading and note-taking techniques. The reading technique is carried out intensively and repeatedly to find data in the form of quotations regarding resilience of instrumental rationality actions, resilience of value rationality actions, resilience of traditional actions, and resilience of affective actions contained in the novel *Dompot Ayah Sepatu Ibu* by J.S. Khairen.

The note-taking technique is used to record data regarding resilience of instrumental rationality actions, resilience of value rationality actions, resilience of traditional actions, and resilience of affective actions contained in the excerpts from the novel *Dompet Ayah Sepatu Ibu* by J.S. Khairen.

The data analysis technique used in this study is hermeneutic data analysis, a technique that emphasizes optimal interpretation of data in written form or the elaboration of the meaning contained within the data (Ratna, 2015:46). Therefore, hermeneutic analysis itself is a second-level meaning-making process that follows the reading and note-taking techniques. In the initial stage, the researcher conducted a first-level meaning-making process known as heuristic reading, which involves a literal understanding of the text. Meanwhile, the second-level meaning-making approach was conducted using a hermeneutic approach, which focuses on understanding the implicit meaning within the data. The following explains the steps taken in data analysis:

- 1) Re-examine the data classification results listed in the data corpus table to ensure consistency between the data obtained and the classification. This aims to facilitate the discussion process in the study.
- 2) Data was analyzed by linking it to the theory that served as the primary foundation for the analysis process.
- 3) To test the validity of the data, the researcher applied the triangulation method, namely by checking the data with theory, sources, and discussions with colleagues and the supervisor.
- 4) The results of the data analysis were then described in detail and systematically in the research results and discussion sub-chapters, in accordance with the research design. This process included data classification followed by a structured discussion based on the main points (analyzed sequentially according to the discussion points).

- 5) The final stage, summarizing the results of the research analysis.

RESULTS

1. Resilience of Rational Value Action

Resilience of instrumental rationality action can be interpreted as an individual's ability to survive, adapt, and recover from various pressures or challenges by making decisions that are planned, systematic, and oriented towards efficiency and effectiveness. This concept emphasizes that individual resilience stems not only from emotional strength, but also from the ability to think rationally in selecting strategies, utilizing available resources, and adapting actions according to the context of the problem. Thus, the resilience of instrumental rationality reflects an individual's adaptive capacity to proactively face adversity through rational calculation to achieve optimal goals. The following describes the aspects of resilience of instrumental rationality in the novel, then relates them to Max Weber's theory of social action.

Asrul is depicted as a gentle, empathetic child with a strong zest for life, representing a child learning to understand the meaning of sacrifice and parental love despite the limitations of life. Furthermore, Asrul is also known as a child who has the ability to recover from various pressures or challenges by making planned, systematic decisions, oriented toward efficiency and effectiveness, as shown in the following data.

"He was once held back a grade. So in just a few seconds, Asrul immediately forgot his failure. He would study harder. There was no time, no energy, not even the slightest chance for sadness." Khairen, 2023:77).

The data demonstrates Asrul's resilience, evident in his ability to survive and adapt amidst increasingly difficult circumstances. Although the frequency of his articles accepted decreased due to competition from more experienced journalists and the limited time he had to attend college, Asrul did not give up. He continued his role as a student



and journalist, despite facing severe financial consequences. Furthermore, in an act of instrumental rationality, Asrul demonstrated the ability to rationally manage and prioritize resources. The decision to allocate his entire income to college expenses, despite the inability to send money to Umi, reflected a goal-oriented action. Education was seen as a strategic means to achieve a better life in the future, and therefore worthy of prioritization over other needs. Furthermore, Asrul rationally utilized available facilities to reduce expenses, such as relying on the office kitchen for meals or accepting an invitation to treat someone to dinner from Mr. HSC. These actions demonstrate a calculated efficiency in maintaining survival amidst economic constraints. Despite his limited income, he still strives to maintain a balance between basic needs and long-term goals.

Zenna is persistent and consistent in seeking solutions to housing issues. Amidst her busy routine of teaching and selling Tupperware, Zenna still sets aside time and energy to search for affordable housing, as shown in the following data.

"After every teaching session, every time she goes around selling Tupperware, Zenna takes public transportation in any direction to look for affordable housing. The further out she goes, the more land and houses are available at prices that are within their reach." (Khairan, 2023:162).

This data can be interpreted as Zenna's resilience reflected in her persistence and consistency in finding solutions to housing problems. Amidst her busy routine of teaching and selling Tupperware, Zenna still sets aside time and energy to search for affordable housing. This action demonstrates resilience and tenacity in the face of life's pressures, as well as a willingness to keep trying even though the process is tiring and time-consuming. Furthermore, in the context of instrumental rationality, Zenna demonstrates rational and strategic calculations in achieving her

goals. Her decision to take public transportation in any direction demonstrates flexibility in exploration, while her search focus is directed towards the suburbs due to more affordable land and housing prices. This reflects a focus on efficiency and effectiveness, namely adapting search locations to one's financial capabilities. The link between these two concepts is evident in the optimal utilization of existing resources. Zenna uses relatively inexpensive public transportation and her free time after work to conduct site surveys, ensuring her home search effort is carried out without significantly increasing costs. This strategy demonstrates Zenna's resilience through planned, rational, results-oriented actions.

Zenna is a risk-taker, responsible, and visionary. Her decision to pawn her employee certificate demonstrates courage and a strong determination to fight for the future, even though it carries significant risks. Her "calculate everything" approach reflects her careful and deliberate approach before making important decisions. Zenna is unafraid to start from very modest means, as evidenced by her willingness to purchase a house that was still empty, with a dirt floor and no partitions. This confirms her tenacity, hard work, and a long-term perspective, prioritizing future opportunities and hopes over immediate comfort, as illustrated by the following data:

"They agreed. After calculating everything, Zenna pawned her employee certificate and then took out a mortgage. Two houses at once, with dirt floors, no bedrooms, just a completely empty space." (Khairan, 2023:163).

This data demonstrates Zenna's resilience, demonstrated by her courage to face limitations and risks in order to achieve her long-term goal of owning her own home. The house's "dirt floor, no rooms, completely empty space" demonstrates that Zenna didn't wait for ideal conditions to act. Instead, she accepted initial limitations as part of the process of surviving and recovering, reflecting

mental resilience and an adaptive attitude to difficult situations. Furthermore, in the context of instrumental rationality, Zenna's decision to pawn her employee's decree and apply for a mortgage was based on a rational calculation of available resources and desired goals. This "calculation here and there" process demonstrates a systematic evaluation of financial capabilities, risks, and benefits. Pawning her employee's decree was chosen as the most feasible means of accessing financing, while taking on two houses simultaneously was a strategy to secure assets amidst limited options. The connection between these two concepts is evident in Zenna's long-term benefit orientation. Despite the modest initial conditions of the house, this decision provided the foundation for residential ownership that could be gradually expanded. Thus, Zenna's resilience is manifested through planned, courageous, and goal-oriented instrumental actions, not simply passive resistance to adversity.

2. Resilience of Value-Rational Action

Resilience of value-rational action can be defined as an individual's ability to persist, adapt, and consistently act based on internalized fundamental values, even when faced with pressure, failure, or unfavorable circumstances. This resilience is reflected in an individual's steadfastness in maintaining moral, ethical, or religious integrity as the primary foundation of their actions, without relying on material outcomes, instrumental success, or social recognition. By adhering to value-rationality, individuals gain a stable sense of meaning and purpose, which serve as a source of internal strength to face life's challenges. The following describes aspects of resilience of value-rational action found in the novel, then relates them to Max Weber's theory of social action.

Asrul's character is able to see and appreciate the struggles of others, even when they are in more difficult circumstances personally. His acknowledgment of Zenna's significant role in the

family demonstrates emotional maturity and a deep sense of gratitude. Through his words, Asrul appears as someone who is sensitive to the feelings of others, respects Zenna's sacrifice, and is not afraid to express his admiration with honesty, as in the following data.

"I envy you," Asrul said. "Why is that?" Zenna was still sobbing. "Your parents are gone, but you are still so strong for your family. And for our family too. Imagine if Zenna wasn't here, we would all have collapsed long ago." (Khairan, 2023:168).

This data can be interpreted as indicating a link between resilience and the rationality of values reflected in Asrul's character. Asrul's expression of envy toward Zenna is not merely an emotional expression, but rather a recognition of Zenna's strong values and resilience in dealing with the loss of her parents. This loss is a traumatic experience that can potentially weaken an individual, yet Zenna is able to rise above it and fulfill a vital role for her family. Furthermore, in the context of resilience in value-rational action, Zenna's strength stems not from considerations of personal gain or instrumental interests, but rather from a commitment to the values of responsibility, care, and devotion to her family. Despite her grief, Zenna continues to prioritize the continuity and integrity of her family. This demonstrates actions oriented toward internalized fundamental values, such as solidarity and sacrifice, which serve as the primary foundation of her behavior. Asrul, through his admission that "we would have all fallen apart long ago" without Zenna, indirectly emphasizes that Zenna's resilience serves as a collective support for the family. Zenna's resilience not only impacts her personally but also provides social strength for those around her. Thus, resilience in value-rational action is not merely individual but has a broad social dimension. Based on these data, it can be concluded that Asrul views Zenna as a representation of resilience in value-rational action.



Zenna is known as an empathetic, resilient, and caring individual. She is able to understand the grief of others because she has experienced similar losses and failures in her own life. The bitter experiences she shares, from the loss of family members, personal failures, to threats to her future, have not brought her down, but instead have fostered resilience and inner strength, as illustrated in the following passage.

“So, if you're sad because your house was swept away, I know how it feels. That's why I came all this way. Now it's just a matter of whether or not you'll get back up?” Zenna sat closer. “My father is gone. I lost my voice. I had a wedding canceled. My studies were in danger of failing.” Hearing this, Asrul felt as if he were looking in the mirror. Weren't all the hardships of his life similar to Zenna's? He was moved. Zenna had no business coming all this way to pick Asrul up, but she did.” (Khairan, 2023:115).

The data can be interpreted as representing the resilience of value-rational action in Zenna's character through her attitude, choice of actions, and the value orientation that underlies her behavior. Zenna does not deny the suffering she has experienced, such as the loss of family members, the failure of personal relationships, and threats to her education. Acknowledging this series of bitter experiences shows that Zenna's resilience is not the result of the absence of problems, but rather the ability to survive and continue living amidst the accumulation of crises. Then, in the context of value-rational action, Zenna's decision to come all the way to meet Asrul is not driven by considerations of personal gain or formal obligations. Her actions are based on the values of empathy, solidarity, and concern for others, which have been internalized as life principles. Although rationally instrumental, these actions do not provide direct benefits for her, Zenna still does them because they view them as aligned with the humanitarian values and moral responsibility she

believes in. Furthermore, Zenna's resilience is reflected in her ability to transform experiences of suffering into a source of strength to strengthen others. The statement "Now it's just a matter of whether to get up or not?" indicates that Zenna has gone through the process of accepting and making sense of the wounds of her life. Thus, she not only rises up personally but is also able to encourage others to do the same. This is where Zenna's resilience functions actively and constructively.

Zenna's determination to pick up Asrul, even though it "has nothing to do with her directly," confirms that her resilience is normative and value-oriented. She maintains a commitment to the values of caring and togetherness as part of her identity. Therefore, Zenna's character can be understood as a representation of resilience in value-rational action, namely the ability to endure, rise up, and act consistently based on fundamental values, while simultaneously using the experience of suffering as a basis for strengthening social and humanitarian relationships.

3. Resilience in Traditional Action

Resilience in traditional action can be interpreted as the ability of individuals or community groups to maintain, continue, and interpret traditional practices as a source of social and cultural resilience in the face of change and social pressure. Traditional actions, based on customs and collective memory, provide stability, a sense of order, and continuity of values that strengthen identity and social solidarity. Through the transmission of traditions across generations, communities gain resilience to survive amidst the dynamics of the times. However, the resilience of traditional practices depends not only on the continuity of these practices but also on the community's ability to adapt and reflectively reinterpret traditions to remain relevant in a constantly changing social context. Below, we describe aspects of the resilience of traditional practices found in the novel, then relate them to Max Weber's theory of social action.

Simple living habits are rooted in experiences and values that have been ingrained since ancient times. Zenna's choice to bring her own lunch from home, rather than following her friends to the cafeteria, demonstrates a consistent and repeated pattern of actions, and can therefore be understood as a traditional action rooted in thrifty and independent living habits, as shown in the following data.

"At lunchtime, all her friends ran to the cafeteria. Zenna didn't. She brought her own lunch from home. Back in high school, especially in third grade, she ate almost every morning only boiled corn." (Khairan, 2023:90)

This data demonstrates that Zenna's simple lifestyle habits are rooted in experiences and values ingrained in her past. Zenna's choice to bring her own lunch from home, rather than following her friends to the cafeteria, demonstrates a consistent and repetitive pattern of actions, and can therefore be understood as a traditional practice rooted in frugal and independent living habits. This habit stems not from instrumental rational considerations, but from everyday experiences that have shaped Zenna's behavior since high school. Zenna's recollection of eating boiled corn almost every morning during her third year of high school demonstrates how simple life experiences have become part of her personal memory, functioning like a collective memory within the family. This habit represents the values of simplicity and resilience in the face of economic constraints. These values are then continually repeated in Zenna's life today, fostering resilience in the face of social pressures, such as the temptation to conform to the lifestyles of her peers.

Laeli's direct assistance after school to help Umi carry firewood to sell at the market reflects a deeply rooted and repetitive habit. These activities were not solely driven by instrumental rational considerations, but rather by traditional values of responsibility, family cooperation, and a spirit of mutual cooperation passed down through the gen-

erations, as shown in the following data.

"Laeli, having just returned home from school, immediately helped Umi carry firewood to sell at the market the next day. Toward evening, the rain came down without a drizzle. It poured down in torrents. The roof of the wooden house leaked everywhere. Umi was anxious. They were the only two in the house. In this village, there were no loudspeakers. For decades, the drum (bedug) had been used to signal the call to prayer. At dusk, the sound of the drum was inaudible. It was drowned out by the torrential rain like bullets. The oil lamp in the house was lit, but it had to be covered with plates on all sides. A strong wind blew it out every now and then. The atmosphere was tense. No amount of storytelling could lull Laeli to sleep. Umi was already so sleepy that she dreamed of coming to pick her up." (Khairan, 2023:105).

This data can be interpreted as Laeli's involvement in daily life practices rooted in the traditional customs and values of her family and community. Laeli's actions, immediately helping Umi carry firewood to sell at the market, reflect a deeply rooted and repeated habit. These activities are not driven solely by instrumental rational considerations, but rather by traditional values such as responsibility, family cooperation, and a spirit of mutual cooperation passed down through generations. Environmental conditions, such as leaky wooden houses, heavy rain, the absence of loudspeakers, and the use of a drum to signal the call to prayer, demonstrate a traditional lifestyle fraught with limitations. In this situation, Laeli and Umi's actions represent a form of adaptation to less-than-ideal circumstances. The habit of living simply by utilizing traditional tools, such as oil lamps and the drum, is part of a long-standing local community coping mechanism. This practice fosters psychological and social resilience in both Laeli and her family, in the face of natural conditions and limited resources. The resilience of Laeli's traditional practices is also reflected in her ability to



cope emotionally amidst the tense atmosphere. Although heavy rain, strong winds, and unsafe housing conditions evoke fear, Laeli remains committed to the lifestyle she has known since childhood. The tradition of simple living and the habit of facing hardship without many modern amenities foster Laeli's resilience, allowing her to persist despite the presence of anxiety and discomfort. Umak's habit of accompanying Joven every day after dawn, under still dark skies until he reaches the "last asphalt" at Simpang Rambutan, reflects a pattern of actions that are carried out repeatedly. This practice indicates a traditional action because it is based on old habits passed down from generation to generation, where sacrifice and perseverance in raising children are seen as a family's moral obligation, as in the following data.

"It's okay, just let Umak take you there and pick you up." So, every day after dawn, Umak accompanied Joven, her grandson. Driving under the still dark dawn sky, towards the final asphalt. The name of the last asphalt place is Simpang Rambutan." (Khairan, 2023:166).

This data can be interpreted as showing that Umak consistently practices family care and responsibility as part of an ingrained lifestyle. Umak's statement, "It's okay, I'll take you there," demonstrates an attitude of acceptance and willingness to take on the role of caregiver without considering personal interests instrumentally. This action is driven more by traditional family values, particularly the role of parents or elderly parents in caring for and protecting family members, including grandchildren. Umak's daily habit of escorting Joven after dawn, under still-dark skies, to the "final asphalt" at Simpang Rambutan, reflects a pattern of repeated actions. This practice signifies traditional behavior because it is based on long-standing customs passed down through generations, where sacrifice and perseverance in childcare are seen as a moral obligation of the family. In this context, distance, time, and unfavorable natural conditions do not hinder Umak from con-

tinuing to carry out her role. The resilience of Umak's traditional behavior is evident in her ability to endure, physically and emotionally challenged by a demanding routine. Her willingness to be active from early morning demonstrates the resilience built from simple living habits and hard work. The tradition of parenting based on emotional closeness and collective family responsibility provides Umak with the strength to consistently fulfill this role, despite the limitations of age and environmental conditions.

4. Affective Action Resilience

Affective action resilience can be defined as an individual's ability to manage, control, and recover from emotional responses that arise spontaneously when faced with challenging or stressful situations. This ability enables individuals not only to express emotions naturally but also to direct these affective actions so that they remain adaptive and do not develop into inappropriate behavior. Through resilience, individuals are able to interpret their emotional experiences constructively, learn from their affective responses, and adapt their behavior to social demands and the life context they face. The following describes aspects of affective action resilience in the novel, then relates them to Max Weber's theory of social action. Zenna no longer expresses her emotions separately and alone, but rather channels her grief through emotional closeness with Asrul, as shown in the following data.

"The mourning ceremony has passed. While Zenna used to cry by having to find a bucket, pour water, and dip her face into it, now she no longer does. She dips her face into Asrul's chest. They know they only have themselves to get through life." (Khairan, 2023:169).

This data can be interpreted as indicating a significant change in how Zenna expresses and manages her grief. Previously, Zenna was depicted crying in isolation by dipping her face into a bucket, indicating an affective act of individual and closed emotional outpouring. This response

reflected her difficult emotional state and the limited emotional support she had at the time. The link between affective resilience and resilience is evident in the shift in how Zenna deals with grief. In this data, Zenna no longer expresses her emotions separately and alone, but instead channels her grief through emotional closeness with Asrul. This act of dipping her face into Asrul's chest demonstrates Zenna's ability to utilize interpersonal relationships as a source of emotional strength. This change signifies the development of resilience, where Zenna is able to adapt to the experience of grief in a healthier and more supportive manner. The realization that they "only have themselves to get through this" emphasizes the relational dimension of Zenna's resilience. Zenna does not negate her grief emotions, but rather processes them into a drive to build mutually reinforcing emotional interdependence. This affective action is adaptive because it helps Zenna maintain emotional stability and move on with her life after the grief event.

DISCUSSION

Based on the research results, forms of social action resilience were identified in eight characters: Asrul, Zenna, Laeli, Umi, Bapak, Irsal, Umak, and Yenti. Each character exhibits a distinct resilience influenced by instrumental rationality, value rationality, traditionalism, and affective action. These four forms of resilience do not exist in isolation but interplay, shaping the characters' resilience patterns in the novel in the face of social, economic, emotional, and moral pressures. These findings indicate that resilience in the novel is not merely defined as a passive ability to survive, but also as an active process of making decisions, interpreting suffering, and maintaining a meaningful life.

Instrumental rationality resilience is the most dominant category found. This dominance indicates that the characters in the novel tend to respond to life's difficulties through rational considerations oriented toward goals, efficiency, and resource management. The characters Asrul, Zenna, Bapak, and Yenti demonstrate this resilience pattern through strategic decisions, such as prioritizing

education, managing finances, choosing the most feasible means, and avoiding long-term burdens that could potentially worsen life circumstances. Instrumental resilience, in this context, emphasizes that resilience is not only related to mental strength but also to the ability to design realistic and adaptive life strategies to cope with limitations.

Furthermore, resilience in the actions of value rationality is widespread among the characters Asrul, Zenna, Laeli, Umi, and Irsal. This type of resilience demonstrates that the characters' actions are not solely driven by considerations of profit and loss, but rather by deeply internalized moral, religious, and familial values. Zenna is the most prominent representative in this category due to her consistency in upholding the values of empathy, family responsibility, and social solidarity despite personal hardship. These findings demonstrate that value rationality serves as a normative foundation that provides meaning and purpose in life, enabling individuals to survive and thrive without relying solely on material gains.

Traditional resilience is demonstrated through the characters of Zenna, Laeli, and Umak. This form of resilience has strong social significance because it is rooted in customs and values passed down through generations. Traditional practices such as parenting patterns, family cooperation, and simple living habits demonstrate that tradition can be a source of strength in the face of less-than-ideal conditions. In this context, resilience is not built through complex rational reflection, but rather through the repetition of deeply rooted social practices that provide a sense of security and continuity in the characters' lives.

Affective resilience is found in the characters Asrul and Zenna. This resilience is reflected in the characters' ability to manage emotional responses, such as anger, fear, sadness, and empathy, so that they do not escalate into destructive conflict. This finding suggests that emotions are not always debilitating but can instead be a starting point for learning and adjustment. Asrul, for example, demonstrates the ability to correct his affective actions after realizing their emotional impact, allowing the conflict to be resolved constructively. This con-



firms that affective resilience is closely related to emotional maturity and social sensitivity.

Each character displays a different combination of resilience forms, depending on their background, social position, and the challenges they face (Elmustian & Razak, 2021). Using Max Weber's theory of social action, this study demonstrates that resilience is not only manifested in individual resilience but also reflected in meaningful, value-oriented social actions that contribute to the sustainability of social relationships. Thus, this novel presents resilience as a dynamic social process, enabling individuals not only to survive but also to positively impact their surroundings.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research results and discussion, the resilience of the characters in the novels studied is reflected in various forms of social action that align with Max Weber's theory of social action. Resilience is not only seen as a character's ability to survive difficult conditions, but also as a dynamic process manifested through meaningful actions based on rational considerations, values, habits, and affective drives. Each character exhibits a different response to the pressures and challenges of life, but all of them are directed toward maintaining their own survival, dignity, and purpose in life.

The research findings indicate that instrumentally rational actions illustrate the characters' resilience in designing concrete strategies and steps to effectively achieve specific goals. Value-rational actions reflect the characters' steadfastness in upholding principles, moral beliefs, and life values despite facing limitations and suffering. Meanwhile, traditional actions demonstrate resilience rooted in habits and behavioral patterns passed down through generations as a source of psychosocial strength. Affective actions, on the other hand, demonstrate the characters' emotional resilience that emerges spontaneously in response to specific situations, such as empathy, compassion, and concern for others.

Thus, it confirms that resilience in literary works is not merely a psychological concept, but

can also be related to social action, as formulated by Max Weber. Character resilience is built through the interaction between social structures, cultural values, and individual action choices. This finding reinforces the view that literary works can interpret human social reality in depth, enabling us to understand the dynamics of human social action in facing the complex realities of life.

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